

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-15 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 MC-02 ACDA-19 DODE-00 PM-07

SS-15 NSC-10 L-03 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /144 W

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R 012245Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5379

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 3739

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS ES HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAN REACTION TO SALVADORAN AIRCRAFT PURCHASE

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 3669 AND 3701

1. INTERVIEW WITH FONMIN CESAR A. BATRES APPEARED IN LA NOTICIA ON SEPTEMBER 28. REPORTEDLY BATRES STATED THAT IN REGARD TO SALVADOR PLANE PURCHASE "THE COUNTRIES OF THE AREA WILL BE OBLIGED TO TAKE SIMILAR MEASURES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN AN EQUILIBRIUM OF FORCES." HE POINTED OUT THAT EACH NATION HAS THE RIGHT TO EMPLOY RESOURCES AS IT SEES FIT, BUT THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND WHY SUCH RESOURCES SHOULD BE DESTINED TO ARMS PURCHASE WHEN THEY COULD BE USED FOR IMPROVING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. HE CALLED ON THE HONDURAN PEOPLE FOR UNITY AND STATED THAT "NO ELEMENT OF PRESSURE COULD FORCE HONDURAS TO VARY ITS POSITION WITH RESPECT TO EL SALVADOR."

2. EL TIEMPO, LA NOTICIA AND EL CRONISTA ALL COMMENTED ON BATRES' INTERVIEW. IN GENERAL, THE TONE OF THE EDITORIALS AND STORIES WAS SUSPICION OF EL SALVADOR'S MOTIVES IN BUYING AIRCRAFT COMBINED WITH VIEW THAT SUCH

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ACTION MAKES NEGOTIATIONS MORE DIFFICULT. BOTH TIEMPO

AND EL CRONISTA CARRIED COPIES OF MAP WHICH APPEARED IN
SEPTEMBER 18 EDITION OF SALVADORAN PAPER EL DIARIO DE
HOY. 1852 MAP SHOWS EL SALVADOR WITH BORDER ON
CARIBBEAN AND POSSESSING LARGE PART OF PRESENT AREA OF
HONDURAS. BOTH PAPERS USED MAP AS PROOF OF SALVADOR'S
AGRESSIVE AMBITIONS.
DAVIS

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